

A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF ETHNIC MINORITY'S LIVELIHOOD IN A RURAL AREA, CENTRAL VIETNAM

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1. OBJECTIVES AND BACKGROUND

Since the end of Vietnam War, land use in rural area of Vietnam has been changed dramatically due to FLA (Forest Land Allocation) and the settlement policy for ethnic minorities. Although the *Co Tu* people, one of the ethnic minorities living in central Vietnam, used to be farmers engaging in swidden agriculture, most of them are engaging in forestry, especially Acacia plantations. Accordingly new land-use systems have been established over the last decades after the enforcement of several policies. Few studies have, however, so far been conducted and the current features and problems of land use by ethnic minorities have not been focused on yet.

The objectives of this study is to clarify the *Co Tu* ethnic minority people's livelihood based on their land use and to reveal the structures of their land use from a microscopic perspective through the field survey and statistical analysis.

2. METHODOLOGY

Doi hamlet, Thuong Lo commune, Nam Dong district, Thua Thien- Hue Province was chosen as a study site and participant observations and semi-structural interviews to villagers and local governments had been conducted in June and between September and October, 2014. The collected data was analyzed by both Principal Component Analysis and Cluster Analysis. In the "Cluster analysis 1", area data of four main commercial products (acacia, rubber, rice, cassava) by each household were employed as the explanatory variables while "Cluster analysis 2" employed fruits and vegetables as the explanatory variables classified in accordance with the purpose of use (personal consumption, sale, or either one). For each cluster analysis, firstly the features of land use were examined by principal component analysis, and then each of household was classified according to its main component scores.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of "Cluster analysis 1", households in Doi hamlet could be classified into two types according to the features of their land uses; *households relying on the acacia forestry* and *households using their land in well-balanced*. Further cluster analysis detected that some households among *households relying on the acacia forestry* were heavily dependent on the acacia forestry. From the results of "Cluster analysis 2", households were classified into three types according to the purpose of use; *acacia forestry and personal consumption type*, *cultivation for sale type* and *no use land type*. Furthermore, each of classified household was examined by comparing with the ownership status of land and the number of households engaging in non-land use work respectively. In the results, *households relying on acacia forestry* could be classified into two types; *land dependent type* which could be affected by natural disaster directly, and *non-land use work dependent type* which could be affected by natural disaster indirectly. Many of households consisting of about 95% of all households are dependent on the cultivation for sale because of serious lack of their own lands and job opportunities outside the hamlet and must be vulnerable to disasters because they don't have hardy plants. On the other hand, some households are carrying out small-scale agriculture for hardy crops in addition to acacia forestry. It can be said that they are avoiding the potential risks by these mixed farming systems. Additionally, this study detected potential risks by referencing several issues concerning sustainability of livelihood from previous studies about past monoculture cases in Vietnam. It would be necessary to reconsider the FLA, disseminate the knowledge of potential risks caused by monoculture to local residents and government, and construct exhaustive land use planning for improving the structure of their livelihood.